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Community association legislative trends & homeowner satisfaction: 2023 state advocacy priorities

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Boston, MA CAI state government affairs efforts are a member-driven, targeted advocacy program dedicated to improving policy outcomes for the community association housing model.

To help determine 2023 priority issues, the CAI Government & Public Affairs team surveyed nearly 1,000 CAI members including the federal legislative action committee (LAC), Government & Public Affairs Committee, and state LAC representatives.

Condominium Safety Issues

Almost 50% of respondents said they anticipate condominium safety issues in 2023, including proposals that cover:

- Reserve studies and funding. CAI recommends statutorily mandating reserve studies and funding for all community associations. CAI recommends additional requirements by developers during the development process and prior to transition to homeowners.
- Building inspections, maintenance, and structural integrity. CAI worked closely with developers on these recommendations. Structural integrity is addressed through statutorily mandated building inspections at 10 years, 20 years, and every five years thereafter. Inspections are based on the American Society of Civil Engineers' published protocol for building inspections.

Full public policy positions for condominium safety may be found at www.condosafety.com.

Community Association Housing Model Trends

A large portion of the legislation CAI monitors covers community association housing model trends such as community values, rentals, board authority, and more.

Community values: i.e., solar panels, electric vehicle charging stations, landscaping requirements, etc. 42% of respondents believe community associations should be allowed to develop reasonable rules that are based on community values.

Short- and long-term rentals. CAI encourages policymakers to engage industry stakeholders,

including community associations, when crafting regulations in an open and transparent manner, and provide the opportunity for comment. A board of directors, with homeowner input, is the appropriate governing body to craft policies regarding whether short- and long-term rentals are appropriate for their community.

Board authority. Community association leaders have a legal and ethical obligation to adhere to the association's governing documents and abide by all applicable laws. Boards should have the authority to set expectations of owners and non-owner residents to meet their financial obligations to their community association. It is important for board members to balance the needs and obligations of the community with those of individual homeowners and residents.

Response to threats and violence against managers, staff members, and association boards. CAI is committed to discussing public policy options, training programs, resources, and support to ensure senseless acts of violence do not occur.

Simplified process for removing discriminatory restrictive covenants. CAI supports a process to remove antiquated and unenforceable discriminatory restrictions contained in covenants without a vote of owners. CAI advocates for state legislation that provides for removal of restrictions deemed discriminatory under the federal Fair Housing Act or state antidiscrimination laws.

Homeowner Satisfaction Interactive Webpage

The Foundation for Community Association Research has released a new interactive webpage for residents, housing stakeholders, and researchers to examine and compare community association governance, management, amenities, and overall satisfaction across the U.S.

The first-of-its-kind dashboard showcases housing data and exclusive information from 2016 through 2022 from the Homeowner Satisfaction Survey, a biennial, nationwide survey conducted by the Foundation for Community Association Research and administered by independent researcher Zogby Analytics.

The Homeowner Satisfaction Survey provides a better understanding of how 74 million Americans describe their experience living in the 358,000 community associations, commonly referred to as condominiums, homeowner associations, and housing cooperatives, in the U.S.

“The interactive dashboard allows homeowners and housing stakeholders to view and compare community association data by region, year, and topic, including neighbor engagement, cost of assessments, rules, community management, and overall satisfaction,” said Dawn Bauman, CAE, executive director of the Foundation and CAI's senior vice president for government and public affairs. “For more than 15 years, this report, sourced by lawmakers, legal professionals, homebuilders, developers, and other community association stakeholders, has been incredibly valuable examining the trends and providing clear evidence in support of the country's fastest growing housing model. We're proud to bring the new technology to the community association

housing market.”

Maintenance-free, safety, and cleanliness are top features that make common interest communities—from city-sized, master-planned communities and multi-building condominium complexes to urban cooperatives and small homeowners associations built into tracks of open suburban spaces—a popular choice and lifestyle for millions of Americans. According to results from the 2022 Homeowner Satisfaction Survey, the overwhelming majority (89%) of homeowners and condominium association residents rate their overall experience of living in a community association as “very good” or “good” (67%), or neutral (22%).

At a time when community matters most, the majority (87%) say they knew their home was part of a community association, and nearly half (45%) say the association made them more interested in the home. 87% of respondents believe that their governing board “absolutely” or “for the most part” serves the best interest of the community.

More than half of residents (68%) believe that rules in their communities protect and enhance property values.

Additionally, the report shows that 87% of residents are on friendly terms with their governing boards. Nearly three-quarters (74%) say their community managers provide value and support to residents and their associations. Half of respondents (51%) feel that they are paying “just the right amount” or “too little” in assessments.

View more data from the 2022 Homeowner Satisfaction Survey dashboard at <https://foundation.caionline.org>.

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